

Application No. 10/060,489
Amendment "B" dated January 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed November 23, 2005

REMARKS

By this paper, claims 1, 22, 25, 43 and 45 have been amended, claim 48 added, and no claims have been cancelled.¹ Accordingly, following this paper, claims 1-12, 14-41 and 43-48 remain pending, of which claims 1, 22, 25, 43 and 45 are the only independent claims at issue.

The Office Action, mailed November 23, 2005, considered and rejected claims 1-12, 14-41 and 43-47. Claims 1-12, 14-41 and 43-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lalwaney et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,289,377).²

It will be noted that the latest Office Action also incorporates by reference the rejections made in the Office Action dated July 12, 2005, in which portions of various limitations of "independent claims 1, 22, 25, 42, 43, and 44" were specifically addressed. Applicants note that independent claim 42 is cancelled and that claim 44 is a dependent claim. The basis of rejecting independent claim 45 was not specifically addressed. Additionally, only dependent claims "directed to retrieving the configuration information" were rejected. Applicants note that the rejection appears to be directed towards dependent claims 18-21, 34, 35 and 37-41. To the extent the Examiner's rejection refers to more or fewer dependent claims, Applicants request a specific identification of the rejected claims, so as to provide Applicants with a fair opportunity to respond to the merits of the rejection.

¹ Support for the amendments to the specification and claims, as well as for the new claims is clearly found within the originally filed application. For example, among other passages, paragraphs [0008], [0009], [0075], [0079] and [0085], of the originally filed application provide support for the amendments and the new claim.

² Although the prior art status and some of the assertions made with regard to the cited art is not being challenged at this time, inasmuch as it is not necessary following the amendments and remarks made herein, which distinguish the claims from the art of record, Applicants reserve the right to challenge the prior art status and assertions made with regard to the cited art, as well as any official notice taken, at any appropriate time in the future, should the need arise, such as, for example in a subsequent amendment or during prosecution of a related application. Accordingly, Applicants' decision not to respond to any particular assertions or rejections in this paper should not be construed as Applicants acquiescing to said assertions or rejections.

Application No. 10/060,489
Amendment "B" dated January 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed November 23, 2005

In addition, while the present Office Action incorporates the details of prior rejections, it also withdraws all rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, including those related to the sufficiency of Applicants' disclosure. Nevertheless, the incorporated rejection of dependent claims was based, at least in part, on a perceived "absent [sic] of the disclosure in Applicants' specification." Inasmuch as the Examiner no longer appears to question the sufficiency of the disclosure, Applicants are confused as to the basis of the continued rejection of various dependent claims, as the rejection appears to rely on now-withdrawn findings. Accordingly, in order to provide Applicants with a fair opportunity to respond, a specific recitation of all rejected claims, including a basis of the rejection and the respective teachings of the cited art purported to teach or suggest each and every limitation of the recited claims, is respectfully requested.

The present invention is directed to embodiments in which consuming modules access automatically access configuration information associated with services of a service provider so as to reduce the amount of configuration information manually entered by a user. For example, as recited in claim 1, a method in a requesting computer system is recited in which the requesting computer system accesses an identifier representative of services the consumer modules will consume and automatically, without user intervention, causes a search for configuration information associated with the services represented by the identifier by, at least in part, automatically pushing an identifier representative of the services the consumer modules will consume. Additionally, configuration information resulting from the search is accessed and received by the consumer modules. Further, as clarified by the above amendments, the accessed configuration information includes an identification of the service provider, of which the consumer modules are unaware when accessing the identifier. As amended, claims 22 and 43 are generally directed to a method (claim 22) and computer program product (claim 43) corresponding to the method in claim 1.

Application No. 10/060,489
Amendment "B" dated January 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed November 23, 2005

Claims 25 and 45 are generally directed to a method and computer program product, respectively, for a configuration computer providing the configuration information in response to a request from a requesting computer. As recited in claim 25, for example, the recited method includes an act of a configuration computer system receiving an automated request for configuration information associated with services to be consumed by consumer modules in a consuming computer system that is unaware of the identification of the service provider. As is further recited, the method includes the configuration computer system automatically, and without user intervention, causing identification of the associated configuration information, which includes the identification of the service provider, and further causing the configuration information to be sent to the consuming computer system. Claim 45 is generally directed to a corresponding computer program product for implementing the method of claim 25.

While Lalwaney is generally directed towards methods and apparatus for a client computer receiving configuration information to enable communication from a cable operator's network, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited art fail to anticipate or make obvious the claimed invention. For example, the cited art fails to disclose or suggest, among other things, a method or computer program product in which consumer modules (claims 1, 22, 43) or a consumer computing system (claims 25, 45) are unaware of an identification of a service provider, let alone where configuration information that is accessed or provided (claims 1, 22, 43) or automatically caused to be identified (claims 25, 45), includes service provider identification, as claimed. Moreover, Lalwaney fails to teach wherein the identification of a service provider is an address of the service provider (claim 48), or wherein the configuration computer system is external to the service provider (claim 47).

Application No. 10/060,489
Amendment "B" dated January 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed November 23, 2005

In fact, Lalwaney, which is the only reference cited in the Office Action, discloses the opposite. In particular, Lalwaney teaches modules within a client PC which receive and access IP address configuration information *of the client modules*, and which are necessarily aware of an identification of the service providers inasmuch as an address identification of the service providers is inserted by the client modules into a request for service. (*See Abstract*).

More particularly, Lalwaney teaches dynamically configuring a one-way cable modem which receives data through a broadcast channel. (Col. 1, ll. 12-19). To obtain Internet services, a user requests the services and session initialization occurs. (Col. 5, ll. 40-43; Col. 10, ll. 47-49). Thereafter, a phone modem 126 in a client PC 120 is initialized by requesting an IP address *associated with the phone modem* from a terminal server of the Internet Service Provider (ISP) 140. (Abstract; Col. 10, ll. 50-54). The terminal server obtains the IP address from a phone network address server 146 within the ISP, and assigns the IP address to the phone modem. (Abstract; Col. 10, ll. 50-56). In other words, Lalwaney discloses that the ISP provides, only address identification information of a client module, rather than of a service provider.

After initialization of the phone modem, which thereby establishes two-way communication with the ISP, a cable modem 122 in client PC 120 need to be configured and obtain configuration information that includes an IP address and network configuration parameters for the cable modem. (Col. 4, ll. 19-25; Col. 10, ll. 57-61). Specifically, because the cable modem is a one-way, receive-only adapter, a request for session initialization is not transmitted by the cable modem, but is instead passed through a PPRA 124 and phone modem 126, each in client PC 120. (Abstract; Col. 10, ll. 61-64). In the request for session initialization, the PPRA inserts the IP address of the phone modem, and an IP address destination of the cable network address server 114 of the cable operator network 110 is further specified. (Col. 13, ln. 54 to Col. 14, ln. 3). The phone modem then sends

Application No. 10/060,489
Amendment "B" dated January 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed November 23, 2005

the request which is routed to the cable network according to the address specified by the modules in the client PC. (Col. 14, ll. 4-12). Thereafter, the cable operator network dynamically assigns an IP address for the cable client PC's cable modem and routes it to the cable modem through the phone modem and PPRA. (Col. 4, ll. 52-58; Col. 10, ll. 65-67; Col. 14, ll. 13-32).

In other words, Lalwaney teaches that various modules within the client PC (e.g. cable modem, PPRA, and phone modem) send requests that include identifications of service providers, such that they are necessarily aware of such identifications. Moreover, Lalwaney teaches that the received information includes an IP address identification of the phone modem or cable modem *of the client PC*, and fails to teach wherein the configuration information includes an identification *of the service provider*, as claimed. Lalwaney fails, therefore, to teach or suggest any method or computer program product in which consumer modules or a consumer computer system are unaware of an identification of a service provider, or where configuration information that includes such an identification is accessed, provided, or identified, as claimed. Accordingly, and for at least these reasons, Lalwaney fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention, particularly in combination with the other recited elements.

While only the various independent claims have been specifically addressed herein, each dependent claim is allowable over the cited art for at least the same reasons, and the rejections and assertions of record with respect to the other dependent claims are now moot and therefore need not be addressed individually. Nevertheless, to further differentiate between the cited references and the present invention, various dependent claims will also be specifically addressed.³

³ The discussion of various dependent claims is by way of example only. Inasmuch as the dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims, the failure to specifically address a dependent claim should not be construed as Applicants acquiescing to any assertions of record, or to any teachings or suggestions of the cited art.

Application No. 10/060,489
Amendment "B" dated January 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed November 23, 2005

With respect to claims 2-5, 8, Lalwaney fails to teach or suggest any use of an electronic mail address, let alone an act of the requesting computer system accessing a portion of an electronic mail address that is representative of services the consumer modules will consume (claim 2), accessing an electronic mail domain portion of an electronic mail address (claim 3), generating a Uniform Resource Identifier including a portion of an electronic email address or electronic mail domain (claims 4 and 5), or accessing an identifier representative of electronic mail services (claim 8), as claimed.

With respect to claim 7, Lalwaney fails to disclose wherein an identifier was hard coded into a module included in the requesting computer system, as claimed.

With respect to claim 9, Lalwaney fails to disclose an identifier representative of news group services, as claimed.

With respect to claims 16, 31 and 38, Lalwaney fails to disclose acts of causing a search of a table of configuration information for information associated with services the consumer modules will consume (claims 16, 31) or causing identified configuration information which was contained in a table in the configuration computer system, to be sent (claim 38), as claimed.

With respect to claim 17, Lalwaney fails to disclose an act of causing a search *for a configuration computer system* that contains configuration information associated with the services the consumer modules will consume, as claimed.

With respect to claims 18, 34 and 39, Lalwaney fails to disclose wherein configuration information was coded using XML, as claimed.

With respect to claims 32 and 33, Lalwaney fails to disclose wherein a configuration computer system causes identification of a remote computer system that contains information associated with one or more services that will be consumed.

Application No. 10/060,489
Amendment "B" dated January 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action mailed November 23, 2005

With respect to claim 41, Lalwaney fails to disclose an act of the configuration computer system causing identified configuration information to be sent over a system bus.

With respect to claim 47, Lalwaney fails to disclose wherein the configuration computer system is external to the provider of the services the consumer modules will consume, as claimed. In fact, Lalwaney specifically teaches the opposite in that a link is established between a client module "and the service provider," during which the module "obtain[s] an address from the service provider." (Col. 5, ll. 33-48). In other words, Lalwaney teaches that configuration information is supplied by the service provider rather than by an external configuration computer system, as claimed.

With respect to claim 48, Lalwaney fails to disclose wherein consumer modules are unaware of an address of the service provider, and wherein accessed configuration information includes the address of the service provider, as claimed.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention is allowable over the cited art. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 5 day of January, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,



RICK D. NYDEGGER
Registration No. 28,651
JENS C. JENKINS
Registration No. 44,803
Attorneys for Applicant
Customer No. 047973

RDN:JCJ:ccn